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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine the type of documentation of students' skills desired by employers in the banking and residential carpentry industries. Data were collected by interviews with employers of random samples of banking institutions (thirty-one) and residential carpentry firms (thirty-five) in Oklahoma. Results of the study led to the following conclusions: (1) at present, employers look for those evidences that relate to interpersonal skills and the work ethic rather than vocational skills; (2) candidates able to present an appropriate credential which evaluates job competencies and interpersonal skills will have better opportunities to obtain a job; (3) very little interest was shown in documentation of cognitive skills and levels of education beyond a high school diploma; and (4) there were many commonalities desired in the credential by these two industries. The major recommendation of the study was that the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education staff provide leadership in the development and use of a credential for all vocational programs. (JH)

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COMPETENCY DOCUMENTATION DESIRED BY EMPLOYERS IN BANKS AND RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES

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ABSTRACT

Competency Documentation Desired by Employers
in Banks and Residential Construction Industries

The purpose of this study was to develop a credential in the banking and carpentry areas that will enhance the ability of an interviewer during the interviewing process to evaluate a job applicant. The credential should clearly convey a full understanding and meaning of the qualifications possessed by the applicant.

Data were collected from random samples of banks and savings and loan companies in the banking industry; and from contractors of residential construction in the construction industry. Data collection was accomplished by personal interview.

Results of the study led to the following conclusions:

1. At present, employers look for those evidences that relate to interpersonal skills and the work ethic rather than vocational skills. A credential would be welcomed in the larger banks and in the residential construction industry.

2. Candidates able to present an appropriate credential which evaluates job competencies and interpersonal skills will have better opportunities to obtain a given job. A resume which states educational and job experience and reasons for wanting the job would influence some employers.

3. Personnel interviewers are not presently interested in a credential, and particularly in the construction industry, have a "show me" attitude. There is some evidence that the credential would become useful is the personnel officers knew more about it and if rapport is obtained with training programs and institutions.

4. Very little interest was shown in documentation of cognitive skills and levels of education beyond "a high school diploma."

5. There were many commonalities between the two types of industry. In general, bankers would prefer a more sophisticated evaluation scale while many construction employers would be satisfied with a simple "job ready" evaluation. Minor differences were found such as bankings' interest in a neat application form and the construction industry's interest in safety.

The major recommendation of the study was that Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education staff whould provide leadership in the development and use of a credential for all vocational programs.

COMPETENCY DOCUMENTATION DESIRED BY EMPLOYERS

IN BANKS AND RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES

Introduction

Upon completion of a vocational course of study the next logical step for the student is to seek employment. Without question, more decisions with respect to the acceptability of applicants are based on employment interviews than on any other step or stage in the selection process. An obvious major purpose of the employment interview is to provide one of the succession of hurdles, perhaps the final one, for the candidates for employment.

The employment interview usually focuses attention on two principle subjects: (1) the nature and requirements of the job under consideration and (2) the characteristics of the applicants.

Employment interviews have no single pattern. Most of them however, are conducted by a single interviewer. He may be an employment manager or a supervisor in the operating line organization. The assignment to the employment interview is complex and difficult. Much is expected of these interviews but they should not be expected to be completely successful. They have important limitations that must be recognized. Employment interviews, to be more specific, do not perfectly separate the promising from the unpromising--the successful from the unsuccessful. However, with care and planning, they can be made to perform a highly useful function. On the other hand, if they are used without such thoughtful planning, or if the results are not carefully checked and analyzed, they can mislead and result in serious errors in selection. There is no one best way of carrying out an interview. The best way is the one that achieves the objectives of the interview.

Often the job applicant is a member of American youth seeking employment in some phase of industry after completion of vocational training. Employment statistics reveal that unemployment is very high in the youth categories of Americans seeking employment. The reasons for this high youth unemployment is a combination of many factors that can be identified. One area that needs to be studied is the requirements of the interviewer in a specific industry in order to evaluate the characteristics of the applicant. It is imperative for training institutions to document student skills in a manner that satisfies the requirements of the interviewer in a given industry.

Purpose of This Study

This study is being conducted in order to gather information from employers that will help answer the following questions:

1. What does the employer look for during the interview?
2. What documentation should the candidates take with them to the interview?
3. Are personnel interviewers interested in documentation of psycho-motor skills and levels of competency?

4. Are interviewers interested in documentation of cognitive skills and levels of education?
5. Are interviewers interested in documentation of interpersonal skills?
6. Do different companies/industries want different documentation of skills, e.g., general vs. specific? More specifically, will there be commonalities in documentation needs of such diverse industries as banking and residential construction.

The major purpose then of this study is to develop a credential in the banking and carpentry areas that will enhance the ability of an interviewer during the interviewing process to evaluate a job applicant and clearly convey a full understanding and meaning of the qualifications possessed by the applicant.

Design of Study

Two areas of business and industry, residential construction and banking, were selected to carry out the study. A list of employers was obtained from the Research Department of the Oklahoma Employment Securities Commission. Standard Industrial Classifications (SIC) were used to identify those business and industrial areas that hire graduates of the two training areas. These were SIC codes 152: General Building contractors--Residential Buildings, 601: Commercial and Stock Savings Banks, and 612: Savings and Loan Associations. Random samples, stratified by size of company, were made to include 31 banking establishments and 35 contractors. Tables I and II display the populations by size of firm and the samples selected from each. A structured interview was the technique used to collect the data.

Procedures

Concomitant with the selection of samples, the structured interview was designed along with two check sheets. Field test interviews were conducted at banks in Perkins and Stillwater and a contractor in Stillwater to assure that the interview would be valid and reliable. The interview at Perkins was conducted by the graduate research assistant who would be doing interviewing and the interviews in Stillwater were conducted by the project director who would also be interviewing during the data collection process. Each interview was observed by both interviewers to assure that the procedures would be consistent between the two interviewers. The interview form was revised following the field test and is displayed in Appendix A together with the two check sheets, the example used during the interviews, and the correspondence sent to each firm in the sample.

Letters were then mailed to each firm in the sample together with the rating sheet for identifying items of importance in selecting new employees within the firm. The letters explained the purpose of the project, noted that the employer would be telephoned for an interview appointment, and requested that the rating sheet be completed before the interview.

TABLE 1

BANKING POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Firm Size Employees	Population Firms	Individuals Employed	Sample Firms	Employment Represented By Sample
0-3	7	13	0	0
4-9	104	759	5	38
10-19	153	2,149	8	107
20-49	146	4,387	7	219
50-99	51	3,626	5	363
100-249	12	1,777	1	178
250-499	1	400	1	400
500-999	4	3,010	4	3,010
Totals	478	16,121	31	4,313

TABLE II

RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Firm Size Employees	Population Firms	Individuals Employed	Sample Firms	Employment Represented By Sample
0-3	589	1018	0	0
6-9	326	1847	16	924
10-19	76	933	7	93
20-69	30	879	6	176
50-99	6	367	6	367
Totals	1023	5044	35	1560

Appointments were made by telephone to conduct the interviews. The appointments were scheduled within a flexible time frame because of the travel required between appointments--most often travel between cities and towns. An unrelated study in the health field which required field interviews was completed at the same time in order to save travel costs, therefore, interviews and appointments were intermixed between the two studies. In general, the graduate research assistant conducted the interviews in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metropolitan areas and the project director conducted other interviews around the state. One interview was conducted in the Panhandle by an area school supervisor because of the travel involved. His training for the interview was given by the graduate research assistant.

During the course of interviewing it was discovered that some of the firms in the construction area did not fit the definition of residential construction contractors. One such firm apparently had a dummy address, perhaps for income tax purposes, and could not be located. Another firm had no construction employees, but sub-contracted all work. Still other firms were commercial contractors who employed no carpenters.

We also discovered during the field test that there might be more than one person within a firm who was actually responsible for employment. In the urban banks, a number of persons were responsible for employing staff, therefore, it was arbitrarily decided to interview two employers whose area most represented jobs relating to the training programs. Data from a bank at Boise City, included in the sample, was not obtained owing to the travel distance and its similarity to other rural banks in the sample. In all, 29 banking employers in 27 firms and 23 residential construction employers in 22 firms were interviewed.

Following collection of data, frequency counts of responses were made and differences between types of industry and size of firm were tested by use of Chi-Square Statistical Analysis or Fisher's Exact Probability calculation where data did not meet requirements for Chi-Square. Means and rankings were made on the responses on the rating sheets.

Results

Responses to the interview instrument, indicated in Table III, were similar in both industries. The only significant difference between the two related to the sophistication of evaluation desired. The banking employers more often preferred the detailed evaluation (See Appendix A) while the construction employers more often preferred the non-detailed "job-ready" evaluation. An almost equal number preferred the semi-detailed evaluation. Only two bankers liked letter grades and only two contractors liked the Carnegie Unit evaluation.

A large majority from both industries liked the non-detailed listing of competencies, however, less than half seemed willing to differentiate on beginning salaries based on any kind of credential.

TABLE III

RESPONSES TO INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

Item		Banking Response	Residential Carpentry Response	Total Response
Does your organization require documentation of qualifications to be filed by the applicant?	Yes	4	0	4
	No	25	21	46
Does your organization differentiate in beginning salaries for work experience?	Yes	24	20	44
	No	5	1	6
Do you differentiate in beginning salaries for different competency levels in the same job?	Yes	10	10	20
	No	19	11	30
If above is "no" would you differentiate if acceptable documentation was presented?	Yes	4	0	4
	No	15	11	26
Have you been impressed by a type of credential?	Yes	8	3	11
	No	21	17	38
Which example of competencies would best serve your institution in a credential?	Simple	18	10	28
	Detailed	7	2	9
	Job-Related	--	8	8
*Which evaluation example would be most useful to you?	Detailed	11	2	13
	Semi-detailed	9	8	17
	Non-detailed	2	8	10
	Letter Grades	2	0	2
	Carnegie Units	0	2	2

*Significant difference between Banking and Carpentry.

Few have seen any kind of credential which was particularly impressive and only four required any documentation of qualifications. In all four cases they were referring to a traditional transcript. As might be expected, most responded that they make a salary differential between new employees in their business if the employee has had previous work experience in the job category. Some respondents also considered work experience in a related category when making salary differences for beginning employers. Quite often the response was, "we want to see what they can do." In such cases they further explain that salary adjustments were made between a range of three weeks to six months after the employee was hired, but that all new employees in the given job categories started at the same salary.

Employers were asked to rate applicant characteristics on a five point scale from "very important" to "unimportant" to the selection process. Response averages are displayed in Table 4. As indicated by the table there was close agreement between the two types of industries on the three most important characteristics, i.e., dependability, attitude toward work, and cooperation. There was also agreement on the two least important items; letters of recommendation, and training documentation. There was a significantly different response on five items. Verbal communication, applicant appearance, and neatness of application form were more important to bankers while safety and work experiences were more important to the contractors.

Respondents were asked to respond to some additional items which might be included on a credential. They were asked if the items were useful. A summary of their responses is given in Table 5. The name of the school, vocational program, absentee and tardiness records, were considered to be useful in both types of industry. In addition, length of study, date of completion, and graduation were also considered useful by the banking industry. When an analysis was made by size of business or industry, significant differences were found on length of study, date of completion, and graduation usefulness. In general, the larger firms were not interested in these items of information while respondents from the smaller firms were interested.

Results obtained from interviews, even structured interviews, will almost always obtain some serendipitous findings. This study was not an exception in that a number of thoughts relating to vocational education in Oklahoma were expressed by these "consumers" of our vocational program products.

Some comments came equally from both industries. It was most often expressed that a credential will be only as good as the reputation of the vocational instructor and the vocational education institution. More than one person expressed that it would take a number of years, or experience with a number of graduates of a program, before credibility of a credential could be established. Several employers indicated that they would much prefer to talk to the instructor in person or by phone than to look at a credential. Such rapport between instructor and employer would be difficult to obtain beyond the local situation. In our highly mobile

TABLE IV.

RANK ORDER AND MEAN RESPONSES
OF VARIABLES IMPORTANT TO EMPLOYERS

Rank	Variable	Mean* Total	Mean Banking	Mean Carpentry
1	Dependability - Reliability, honesty	1.02	1.00	1.05
2	Attitude toward work - Interest in career objective and desire to learn	1.23	1.25	1.20
3	Cooperation - Ability to work with others	1.29	1.25	1.35
4	Initiative - Ability to work without supervision	1.46	1.54	1.35
5	Adaptability - Adjustment to task or situation	1.61	1.59	1.63
6	Job Skill Quality - Ability to meet standards	1.66	1.67	1.65
#7	Verbal communication ability	1.75	1.42	2.20
#8	Applicant's appearance	1.83	1.50	2.30
9	Job Skill Quantity - Ability to meet production standards	1.85	2.00	1.65
#10	Safety - Observes safety rules and regulations	1.85	2.31	1.25
11	Housekeeping - ability to clean and maintain tools and work stations	2.00	2.15	1.80
#12	Physical skills related to the job	2.07	2.00	2.16
13	Work experience	2.17	2.52	1.70
14	Leadership - Ability to lead others in a desired direction or toward a common goal	2.21	2.32	2.05
15	Levels of competency	2.26	2.19	2.37
#16	Neatness of application form	2.29	1.75	3.05
17	Training documentation (transcripts)	3.04	2.96	3.15
18	Letters of recommendation	3.38	3.46	3.27

*Average response on a five-point scale where 1 = very important and 5 = unimportant.

#Significant difference between Banking and Carpentry.

TABLE V

USEFULNESS OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS ON CREDENTIAL

Item	Response	Banking N	Carpentry N	Total N
Name of School	Useful	6	3	9
	Not Useful	4	2	6
Vocational Program	Useful	8	3	11
	Not Useful	2	2	4
*Length of Study	Useful	7	0	7
	Not Useful	3	5	8
Date of Enrollment	Useful	2	0	2
	Not Useful	8	5	13
*Date of Completion	Useful	6	0	6
	Not Useful	4	5	9
Date of Withdrawal	Useful	2	0	2
	Not Useful	8	5	13
Total Class Days	Useful	3	0	3
	Not Useful	7	5	12
Days Absent	Useful	7	3	10
	Not Useful	3	2	5
Times Tardy	Useful	5	3	8
	Not Useful	5	2	7
*Graduate/Total Program?	Useful	6	0	6
	Not Useful	4	5	9
Supplementary Remarks	Useful	4	1	5
	Not Useful	6	4	10
Instructor Signature/Date	Useful	5	1	6
	Not Useful	5	4	9
For additional information, contact _____	Useful	5	1	6
	Not Useful	5	4	9

*Significant difference between Banking and Carpentry.

society, it seems imperative that leadership must come from the state level to standardize both competencies and evaluation of these competencies in an effort to obtain credibility from one locale to another.

Many of the respondents stated wh they preferred a particular credential example. The reasons included: (1) tasks in detail are too cumbersome to review during the interview and distracts from eye contact--competencies broadly stated would not be, and (2) if the instructor's evaluation indicates the applicant has a given competency the personnel officer can assume the applicant can do all the tasks relating to that competency.

Personal resumes were mentioned by several as the appropriate kind of document to present at the interview. One respondent mentioned that resumes were rare but that a good one greatly impressed him.

Comments unique to the banking industry follow. It was pointed out by several employers in smaller banks that bookkeeping, proofing, and teller operations could vary a great amount from one bank to another. One respondent spoke of the rural bank thirteen miles away that used mechanical teller operations while his operation was still done by hand. Another told of problems he had with a vo-tech banking graduate who had worked in proofing in a larger bank but could not adjust to the different proofing pockets in his operation when she came to work for him. One spoke to the necessity of training for specific jobs in large banks and mentioned a teller training program in Denver as a successful example of training for the teller needs in Denver banks.

Most of the rural bankers explained their requirements were not in training, but rather in the character of the person to be employed. One person stated that the prospective employee should have graduated from the local high school, have a good reputation during and following high school, have parents who had lived in the community for years and preferably should be a permanent resident as evidenced by marriage to a farmer or a business owner. With those kinds of requirements, it is understandable that the rural banks have very stable employees and few job openings. One personnel officer (who also had other jobs) gave his views on the interview and credential, then offered the information that in the eighteen months he has been personnel director he has not had the opportunity to employ anyone.

These kinds of responses have implications for both training and guidance of students. Training should be geared to meet needs of medium sized or larger banks where there are more opportunities for jobs. Students in our rural area school banking programs need to be aware of the probable mobility requirements or the need to move to urban areas in order to obtain banking jobs.

One banker expressed a desire to have an adult supplementary program occasionally for his staff and would be willing to share expenses. Another banker expressed concern about basic machine training, particularly in obtaining a higher degree of skill with a 10-key adding

machine and in typing. Another suggested broad orientation to banking would be all that was necessary so that the employee could see how his/her job fits with the total. Another mentioned broad orientation because his staff does all the various jobs as necessary. Both were most interested in doing the specific competency training in-house.

The personnel officer in one urban bank was excited about the vo-tech banking program and was looking forward to screening her first graduate. She had not been aware of any vo-tech banking programs prior to the interview. One encouraging comment was that the bank did not differentiate in salary based on competency documentation, but that the policy could change if a satisfactory credential was used. Another stated that detailed documentation of specific skills would eliminate unnecessary interviews and hopefully place people in jobs that were equivalent to their skill levels.

There were a number of comments unique to the construction industry. One employer stated that the union card showing that the person has served his apprenticeship was the only credential he was interested in. One stated the selection process for vo-tech carpentry classes was bad--that most graduates he had contacted only took the vo-tech class to get out of academic classes. One commented that students need to be taught more pride in craftmanship. More than one pointed out that the first category in example D of the evaluations was not useful since no trainee could be expected to exceed industry standards.

One mentioned the importance of theory so that skills could be applied in new or different situations.

In the residential construction area in general, the major concerns were with the employee's willingness to work, and the employee's interest in the industry and in making construction his/her career.

One contractor noted that the building of a house in the carpentry program was excellent in that the student could experience the inter-relationship of the several jobs and their effect on the house. He observed that the overall orientation helped to eliminate errors one might make in one phase which would adversely affect the next phase of the construction.

Many of the contractors were most interested in specialists, e.g., roofers or framers, and were concerned mainly with the work attitudes. Those who used specialists seemed willing to accept on-the-job training as adequate. An outspoken exception to that view was the contractor who does only remodeling on middle and upper class homes. He stated that he wanted his carpenters to be generalists so that they could cope with whatever was required on a given job. He also was one of the few employers in the construction area who was interested in the applicants' appearance. He pointed out that remodeling was different from new construction in that the customer (his example was "the doctor's wife") was often underfoot and he felt that appearance and demeanor were important aspects of a satisfactory job.

In carpentry as well as in banking, the work ethic is still very much alive in the minds of employers.

Conclusions

The conclusions of this study are related to the research questions raised:

1. What does the employer look for during the interview?

Our conclusion is that at the present time, the employer looks for those evidences that relate to interpersonal skills and the work ethic. These evidences are identified rather subjectively with each employer and with his/her skill in interviewing. Such subjective evidence as amount of eye contact and communication ability of the prospect are most often used. There is much evidence that employers in residential construction and employers in larger banks would welcome a credential--given an opportunity to establish better rapport with instructors and training institutions.

2. What documentation should the candidate take with him/her to the interview?

As stated above, the candidates would have better opportunities to obtain the job if they were able to present a credential from their training institution which evaluated their job competencies and interpersonal skills. In addition, there is some evidence that a resume which states educational experience, job experience, and reasons for wanting a job in the specific industry would influence the employer. Depending upon the situation, i.e., if an application is required before the interview, these items of documentation might well be submitted at the time of application and before the interview. An example of an appropriate credential in each industry is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

3. Are personnel interviewers interested in documentation of psycho-motor skills and levels of competency?

Our conclusion must be a qualified no. At present there is overwhelming evidence that the locally owned rural bank does not require many employees, that turn over is low, and the selection of new employees is not based on psycho-motor skills. The exception may be that the employer would require typing skills that could be obtained in a general high school typing course. The personnel officers in medium and large banks would be interested in documentation of levels of competency, but would also relate evaluations on the credential to the reputation of the program. In the residential construction industry, we must conclude that few are presently interested, however, from the general tone of the interviews we feel that there is great potential for interesting the employer in an objective evaluation of skills. With regard to salary differentials, the group attitude is "show me." We feel that the same attitude was expressed with regard to the credential as a whole.

NAME OF SCHOOL/INSTITUTION

BANKING AND SAVINGS AND LOAN PROGRAM

_____
Student

This credential is the instructor's evaluation of the Student's job readiness and ability to succeed in the job areas for which this program trains.

Length of Program _____

Completed Total Program? Yes _____
No _____, _____ weeks.

INTERPERSONAL JOB SKILLS

Skill	Evaluation
Dependability: reliability, honesty, integrity.	1 2 3 4
Attitude Toward Work: interest in career, desire to learn and work.	1 2 3 4
Cooperation: working with others.	1 2 3 4
Initiative: working without supervision.	1 2 3 4
Adaptability: adjustment to task or situation.	1 2 3 4
Housekeeping: maintenance of tools, equipment, and stations.	1 2 3 4
Safety Conscious: observes safety rules and regulations.	1 2 3 4
Attendance: (based on program absent and tardy records.)	1 2 3 4

_____ _____
Instructor Date

TASKS-COMPETENCIES

Task	Evaluation
Opening Checking Accounts.	1 2 3 4
Opening Savings Accounts and Time Deposits.	1 2 3 4
Performing Customer Services.	1 2 3 4
Proof Operations. (NCR 775 proofing system)	1 2 3 4
Bookkeeping: routing checks through bank collection system.	1 2 3 4
Teller Operations.	1 2 3 4

* * * * *

Evaluation Scales

For Tasks-Competencies:
1 = Performs at industry standard.
2 = Performs at job entry level.
3 = Needs assistance to perform.
4 = Inadequate or not trained for this task.

For Interpersonal Job Skills:
1 = Outstanding
2 = Satisfactory
3 = Needs improvement
4 = Not applicable

FIGURE 1.

NAME OF SCHOOL/INSTITUTION

RESIDENTIAL CARPENTRY PROGRAM

_____
Student

This credential is the instructor's evaluation of the student's job readiness and ability to succeed in the job areas for which this program trains.

Length of Program _____

Completed Total Program? Yes _____
No _____, _____ weeks.

INTERPERSONAL JOB SKILLS

Skill	Evaluation
Dependability: reliability, honesty, integrity.	1 2 3 4
Attitude Toward Work: interest in career, desire to learn and work.	1 2 3 4
Cooperation: working with others.	1 2 3 4
Initiative: working without supervision.	1 2 3 4
Adaptability: adjustment to task or situation.	1 2 3 4
Housekeeping: maintenance of tools, equipment, and stations.	1 2 3 4
Safety Conscious: observes safety rules and regulations	1 2 3 4
Attendance: (based on program absent and tardy records.)	1 2 3 4

_____ Instructor

_____ Date

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TASKS-COMPETENCIES

Task	Evaluation
Blueprint Reading	1 2 3 4
Site Layout	1 2 3 4
Forming	
Footing	1 2 3 4
Stem wall	1 2 3 4
Slabs	1 2 3 4
Framing	
Floor & Sill	1 2 3 4
Wall & Partition	1 2 3 4
Roof	1 2 3 4
Roofing	
Asphalt shingles	1 2 3 4
Wood shingles and shakes	1 2 3 4
Exterior wall and trim	1 2 3 4
Interior wall	
Gypsum wallboard install and tape	1 2 3 4
Paneling	1 2 3 4
Stair construction	1 2 3 4
Door hanging & trim	1 2 3 4
Cabinetmaking	1 2 3 4
Flooring	
Hardwood	1 2 3 4
Tile	1 2 3 4

* * * * *

Evaluation for Tasks:
1 = Performs at industry standard.
2 = Performs at job entry level.
3 = Needs assistance to perform.
4 = Inadequate or not trained for this task.

Evaluation for Interpersonal Job Skills:
1 = Outstanding
2 = Satisfactory
3 = Needs improvement
4 = Not applicable

20

FIGURE 2.

4. Are interviewers interested in documentation of cognitive skills and levels of education?

The low ranking given to "training documentation (transcripts)" indicates some lack of interest in cognitive skills and levels of education. An expression of the need for a high school diploma from small bank employers and the relatively high interest in verbal communication ability by both bankers and contractors are the only signs of interest in this area.

5. Are there commonalities in documentation needs of personnel officers in such diverse industries as banking and residential carpentry?

There are many commonalities desired in the credential by these industries. Both industries would be helped by documentation of interpersonal skills of the prospective employer. Given that the construction industry would make use of the credential and given that a valid and reliable credential can be developed to the satisfaction of the industry, the only major difference between the two relates to the sophistication of the evaluation. As a generalization, personnel officers in the banking industry would prefer a more detailed evaluation structure than would contractors. The responses indicated, however, that almost as many respondents in banking preferred the four point scale as preferred the more sophisticated six point scale. In construction, as many preferred the four point scale as preferred the simple "job ready" two point evaluation.

Recommendations

1. State department staff should provide leadership in the development and use of a credential for every program area at every level in vocational-technical education. Although substantive contents will differ between programs, the credential should be standardized in format across programs and institutions to the extent that it would be recognizable as an Oklahoma Vo-Tech credential, as well as being recognized as a credential from a particular institution. So much concern was raised by respondents with regard to the reputation of the program that it seems imperative, in our highly mobile society, that a reputation must be considered statewide. If applicants and personnel officers are to be adequately served by the purpose of a credential, it should represent sound training programs, objective evaluation, and an honest appraisal of the applicant's ability to succeed on the job.

2. Additional research should be conducted in other vocational program areas. It should not be necessary to do a detailed research of all aspects of the credential for a given program. The commonalities found between the two areas in this study indicate that background information and interpersonal skills could be standardized across the program areas. The research should relate to the description or identification of competencies that goes into the credential. Such research could readily

be conducted in conjunction with the task analysis research conducted before developing a new curriculum manual or revising a manual already in existence. Care should be taken to involve the persons who actually do the hiring in industry served by the given program.

3. We would recommend, as first steps in obtaining some standardization across institutions, that results of this study be presented to the State Board for Vocational and Technical Education, the State Advisory Council, and the Oklahoma Area School Administrators Association to test the feasibility of obtaining agreement on a credential format. The model credential for banking and programs in construction trades should be presented for the group's reactions.

4. It is recommended that a model credential be included in all future teacher's manuals and that a model credential be developed for addition to current teacher's manuals as soon as research can validate the competencies to be included in the credential.

5. We recommend that additional research be conducted with regard to the objective measurement of job competencies. Research should build on previous studies, such as those conducted in Oklahoma by Eugene Dollar and the curriculum validation studies conducted by the Research Unit. Other research activities such as USOE's present efforts to contract for development for competency tests in fourteen program areas should also be considered in the development of our research activities. This recommendation results from the frustration experienced by the author in trying to obtain objective performance measures by which to evaluate curriculum manuals. We also realize that standardized formats printed on a credential will not result in a good reputation for the credential across the state unless the evaluations placed on the credential can also be "standardized" through objectivity.

Results of this study did not strongly indicate the usefulness of a credential to business and industry in Oklahoma. Training documentation was considered by employers to be of only slightly greater importance than letters of recommendation. Both were of the lowest priority. Our data collection process submitted the list of variables of possible importance to employers with the initial letter explaining the project and requesting the interview. These check sheets were to be completed before the interview. With very few exceptions, the employers became much more interested in training documentation during the interview particularly as examples were shown to them. Because of this obvious change in their interest levels, we have recommended that a credential be developed and used in all vocational programs in Oklahoma. We would predict that if Oklahoma vocational educators will make the credential work, Oklahoma business and industry will make the most of it--even to changing policies regarding salary differentials for differential credential abilities. Probably no one statement could do more for the image of vocational education in Oklahoma than, "my vo-tech credential got me a job--and I didn't have to start at the bottom of the salary scale!

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW FORMS

AND EXAMPLES

Institution_____

BANKING AND RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INTERVIEW FORM

1. Ask the individual being interviewed if they received a copy of the opinionnaire that was mailed to the firm. If not, ask that the opinionnaire be completed at this time.

2. Does your organization require documentation of qualifications to be filed by the applicant prior to the interview?

_____NO _____YES (comments)_____

_____

3. Does your organization differentiate in beginning salaries for work experience?

_____NO _____YES (comments)_____

_____

4. Does your organization differentiate in beginning salaries for different competency levels in the same job classification?

_____NO _____YES (comment)_____

_____

5. If the answer to Question 4 is NO--would your organization differentiate if an applicant could produce an acceptable documentation of competency from a training institution?

_____NO _____YES (comments)_____

_____

6. Have you been impressed by a type of documentation furnished by a previous job applicant?

_____NO _____YES (comments)_____

_____

7. Describe the type of training documentation you would desire from a job applicant and how that document would aid you in the selection process of new employees. _____

_____

_____

_____

8. Present to the person being interviewed examples of documentation that could be utilized by vocational training schools. Ask the person to select the example that he/she perceives as being most meaningful as a tool for new employee selection.

Competency Sample _____

Evaluation Sample _____

(comments)_____

_____

_____

Pre-Interview Instrument

Institution_____

Rate the following items as you perceive their importance in the selection of new employees at the entry level within your industry. If this list is not inclusive, you may add items that you personally view as important on the blank lines at the bottom of the page. PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWERS!

Rating Scale: 1 = Very Important 5 = Unimportant

Neatness of application form	1	2	3	4	5
Applicant's appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Work Experience	1	2	3	4	5
JOB SKILLS					
Quality - Ability to meet standards	1	2	3	4	5
Quantity - Ability to meet production standards	1	2	3	4	5
Housekeeping - Ability to clean and maintain tools and work stations	1	2	3	4	5
Safety - Observes safety rules and regulations	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative - Ability to work without constant supervision, self-motivated	1	2	3	4	5
Letters of recommendation	1	2	3	4	5
Training documentation (transcripts)	1	2	3	4	5
Levels of competency	1	2	3	4	5
Physical skills related to the job	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal communication ability	1	2	3	4	5
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS					
Dependability - Reliability, honesty, and integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Cooperation - Ability to work with others	1	2	3	4	5
Attitude toward work - Interest in career objective and desire to learn	1	2	3	4	5
Leadership - Ability to lead others in a desired direction or toward a common goal	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability - Adjustment to task or situation	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

EXAMPLE I

Please check the items that appear to be useful to you as an interviewer.

____ Name of School _____

____ Vocational Program _____

____ Length of Study _____

____ Date of Enrollment _____

____ Date of Completion _____

____ Date of Withdrawal _____

____ Total Class Days _____

____ Days Absent _____

____ Times Tardy _____

____ Graduate/Total Program: Yes _____ No _____

____ Supplementary Remarks: _____

_____

_____

____ Signed: _____ Date _____
Instructor

____ For additional information concerning the student's training, please contact _____

Example II

BANKING COMPETENCIES/TASKS

(A) Detailed Record

Competencies	Evaluation
OPENING CHECKING ACCOUNTS	
Assign account numbers	
Complete ACIF card	
Order personalized checks	
Issue temporary checks & temporary deposit slips	
Fill out deposit slips	
Transfer of funds by telephone	
Cross sell bank services	
PROOF OPERATIONS	
Load fanfold paper	
Change ink roll	
Load encoder ribbon	
Change Detail Pocket-Lister Tape	
Operate NCR 775 Proof System	
Open machine	
Prove transactions	
Close machine	
ETC.	

(B) Non-Detailed Record

Competencies	Evaluation
OPENING CHECKING ACCOUNTS	
PROOF OPERATIONS	
BOOKKEEPING	
CASHING, ISSUING, AND ACCEPTING CHECKS	
OPENING SAVINGS ACCOUNTS AND TIME DEPOSITS	
CUSTOMER SERVICES	
TELLER OPERATIONS	

Example II

CARPENTRY COMPETENCIES/TASKS

(A) Detailed Record

Competencies	Evaluation
FRAMING	
A. Floor and Sill	
1. Install sill sealer	
2. Install termite shield	
3. Install sill with box joist attached	
4. Construct beams and girders	
5. Cut and install joists	
6. Install bridging	
7. Install subfloor	
B. Wall Framing	
1. Lay out plates	
2. Cut studs	
3. Construct tees and corners	
4. Cut sills, cripples, headers, and trimmers	
5. Assemble wall members	
6. Raise wall members, plumb and brace	
7. Double Plate	
8. Sub-siding	
ETC.	

(B) Non-detailed Record

Competencies	Evaluation
FRAMING	
A. Floor and Sill	
B. Wall Framing	
C. Ceiling Joist	
D. Frame Roof	
E. Trussed Roof	
FOUNDATION	
A. Footing	
B. Concrete Slab	
C. Stern Wall	
ETC.	

(C) Job-related Record

Competencies	Evaluation
FOUNDATION	
FRAMING	
ROOFING	
INTERIOR FINISH	
ETC.	

Example III

TYPES OF EVALUATIONS

(C) Detailed Evaluation

1 2 3 4 5 6

1 - Performs task/competency with exceptional ability.

2 - Performs task/competency with speed and quality.

3 - Performs task/competency at job entry.

4 - Performs task/competency with periodic assistance.

5 - Performs task/competency with constant assistance.

6 - Cannot perform this task/competency satisfactorily.

(D) Semi-Detailed Evaluation

1 2 3 4

1 - Performs task/competency above industry standard.

2 - Performs task/competency at job entry.

3 - Performs task/competency with periodic assistance.

4 - Not trained in this task/competency.

(E) Traditional Grading System

A B C D F

(no explanation needed)

(F) Non-Detailed Evaluation

1 2

1 - Job ready.

2 - Not job ready for task/competency.

(G) Carnegie Unit Evaluation

1 2 3 4

1 - Over 2 years training.

2 - 13 to 24 months training.

3 - 7 to 12 months training.

4 - 0 to 6 months training.

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY LETTERS

November 27, 1978

Dear

The Research Unit of the State Department of Vocational and T=chnical Education has been asked to obtain data from residential carpentry firms in the State of Oklahoma. The purpose of our study is to determine the type of documentation of students skills desired by employers in the residential carpentry industry.

Your firm has been selected by a random sample from the state's total population of residential carpentry firms. We will be collecting the data by means of short interviews with you and/or others in your firm responsible for hiring, and an opinionnaire which is enclosed.

We will be telephoning you and other residential carpentry administrators in the near future to make appointments for the interviews. Hopefully, we will be able to complete them by the end of December. We will collect the completed opinionnaires at the interviews. We should be able to complete the interview in 20-30 minutes.

We do appreciate your cooperation and look forward to visiting with you.

Sincerely,

Wm. D. Frazier

Wm D. Frazier, Ed.D.
Director
Research Coordinating Unit

Enclosures

WDF/9912/7

November 27, 1978

Dear Employer:

The Research Unit of the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education has been asked to obtain data from banking institutions in the State of Oklahoma. The purpose of our study is to determine the type of documentation of students' skills desired by employers in the banking industry.

Your bank has been selected by a random sample from the state's total population of banking institutions. We will be collecting the data by means of short interviews with you and/or others in your bank responsible for hiring, and an opinionnaire which is enclosed.

We will be telephoning you and other banking administrators in the near future to make appointments for the interviews. Hopefully, we will be able to complete them by the end of December. We will collect the completed opinionnaires at the interviews. We should be able to complete the interview in 20-30 minutes.

We do appreciate your cooperation and look forward to visiting with you.

Sincerely,

Wm. D. Frazier

Wm. D. Frazier, Ed.D.
Director
Research Coordinating Unit

Enclosures

WDF/7339/7